

Remarks

Claims 1, 4, 7 to 9 and 11 are amended. Claims 1 to 12 are pending in this application of which only claims 1 and 4 are in independent form.

Claim 4 was objected to only as being dependent from a rejected base claim. Accordingly, claim 4 is amended to place the same in independent form and to incorporate all the features and limitations of claims 1 to 3 from which it had previously depended so that claim 4 should now be in condition for allowance. Claims 5 to 12 are all dependent from claim 4 so that these claims too should now be in condition for allowance.

Claim 1 had been rejected under 35 USC 102(e) as being anticipated by Pears. However, claim 1 is amended herein to incorporate therein all the features and limitations of claim 6. The features of claim 6 relate to the arrangement of a radial opening formed in one of the first tie rods in the region of the valve plate. Claim 6 includes the further feature and limitation of a venting line running along the interior of the support unit and connected to this radial opening. This is set forth in claim 1, as amended herein, with the clause:

"...a venting line running along the interior of said support unit and connected to said radial opening;"

The above features and limitations are nowhere suggested in Pears and should now permit claim 1 to patentably distinguish the applicants' invention over this reference so that this claim too should now be allowable. Claims 2 and 3 are dependent from

claim 1 so that they too should now be allowable.

The application should now be in condition for allowance.

Respectfully submitted,



Walter Ottesen
Reg. No. 25,544

Walter Ottesen
Patent Attorney
P.O. Box 4026
Gaithersburg, Maryland 20885-4026

Phone: (301) 869-8950

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